TITLE OF THE DOCTORAL STUDY

A Doctoral Study

Presented to the Faculty of the College of Education of Trident at American InterContinental University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education in (PK12 Leadership or Higher Education Leadership)

by

YOUR NAME HERE IN ALL CAPS

Chandler, Arizona

202x

Defended mm dd, year

Approved by:

Office of Academic Affairs

Mm dd, year

Dean: Heidi Linn Smith, Ed.D

Director: Heidi Linn Smith, Ed.D

Committee Chair: name of chair

Committee Member: name the member1

Committee Member: name of the member2

© 202x your full name

***[NOTE: no indent on the first paragraph of the abstract]***

# Abstract

Doctoral Study Title

Trident University International [year]

Limit 350 words. There is no indent on the first paragraph of the abstract. Text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text.

*Keywords*: text, text, text, text

# Acknowledgements

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ii

Acknowledgements iii

List of Tables vi

List of Figures vii

Introduction to the Problem 8

Background 8

Statement of the Problem 8

Purpose of the Study 8

Conceptual Framework 9

Research Questions 9

Significance of the Study 9

Definition of Key Terms 10

Summary 10

Literature Review 11

Methodology and Findings 12

Research Methods and Design 12

Research Questions 12

Research Hypotheses (Quantitative study only) 13

Research Site 13

Population and Sample 13

Instrumentation 14

Data Collection 15

Data Analysis 16

Trustworthiness and Credibility (Qualitative study only) 16

Limitations 17

Delimitations (optional) 17

Results 17

Evaluation of Findings 18

Implications 18

Recommendations 18

Conclusion 19

Application to Practice 20

References 21

Appendix A: Title of Appendix 22

Appendix B: Title of Appendix 23

Appendix C: General Guidelines and Helpful Resources 24

# 

# List of Tables

[Table 1. Caption for Table 1 3](#_Toc321737613)

[Table 2. Caption for Table 2 3](#_Toc321737614)

# List of Figures

[Figure 1. Caption for Figure 1. 3](#_Toc245261328)

[Figure 2. Caption for Figure 2. 3](#_Toc245261329)

# Introduction to the Problem

(8 – 15 pages)

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## Background

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## Statement of the Problem

Address the following: a) what is the overriding problem, b) where the problem is found (context or setting), and c) what needs to be done to solve the problem (make the link to your research design).

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose statement should begin with “The purpose of this qualitative/quantitative/mixed methods) study is to…” If your study is qualitative the central phenomena under study is explained. If your study is quantitative the variables are identified and defined. If your study is mixed method both the central phenomena and variable are described. The participants in the study are mentioned, the setting of the study is explained, the purpose statement compliments the problem statement.

## Conceptual Framework

Your conceptual or theoretical framework is based on your review of the literature and is clearly linked to your purpose statement. How does your study address a gap in the literature/research? What constructs (or variables) does your study attempt to explore or examine? Situate your study within other theory and research. Summarize why your study and the selected methodology addresses the phenomena or variables under study.

## Research Questions

Provide a short introductory sentence and include your research questions in this section. Research questions should link directly to the purpose of a study.  The number of research questions is dependent on the methodology and design.

A quantitative study can include several research questions that include measurable variables.  Quantitative research questions specify the independent and dependent variables. Example quantitative research questions:

How frequently do [participants] [variable] at [research site]?

How does [independent variable] relate to [dependent variable]?

How do [group 1] compare to [group 2] in terms of the [dependent variable]?

A qualitative study will include one central research question and a few subquestions. Qualitative research questions are written using exploratory language to allow participants to share information with you. Example qualitative research question:

What is the [central phenomenon] for [participants] at [research site]?

## Significance of the Study

Describe how your study will contribute to the understand of the problem and who will benefit from your study.

## Definition of Key Terms

Provide definition for key words, phrases or acronyms. Provide an introductory sentence, the list of terms should be formatted as it appears below.

*Term*. Text text ext text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text.

*Term*. Text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text.

## Summary

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# Literature Review

(20 – 35 pages)

Use appropriate APA heading levels to organize your literature review, APA headings and formatting samples are provided below.

**Level 2: Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading**

**Level 3: Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period.** Text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text text.

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# Methodology and Findings

(25 – 30 pages)

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## Research Methods and Design

Qualitative research designs include case study, ethnographic study, ethnography, narrative study, grounded theory, or phenomenological. Quantitative research designs include experimental research (true experimental, quasi-experimental, pre-experimental, or factorial). Non-experimental research includes correlational research, causual-comparative research, or survey research.

## Research Questions

Provide a short introductory sentence and include your research questions in this section. Research questions should link directly to the purpose of a study.  The number of research questions is dependent on the methodology and design.

A quantitative study can include several research questions that include measurable variables.  Quantitative research questions specify the independent and dependent variables. Example quantitative research questions:

How frequently do [participants] [variable] at [research site]?

How does [independent variable] relate to [dependent variable]?

How do [group 1] compare to [group 2] in terms of the [dependent variable]?

A qualitative study will include one central research question and a few subquestions. Qualitative research questions are written using exploratory language to allow participants to share information with you. Example qualitative research question:

What is the [central phenomenon] for [participants] at [research site]?

## Research Hypotheses (Quantitative study only)

If the study is quantitative, provide a null hypothesis and an alternative (or research) hypothesis for each research question. Use the notation for null (H0) and the notation for the alternative (H1). Helpful Resource: Loftus, G. (2010). Null Hypothesis. In Neil J. Salkind (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Research Design*. (pp. 939-943). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

## Research Site

Describe the characteristics of the population you will study. A population is the large collection of individuals you have identified for your study. If your research takes place within a specific educational setting, describe the demographics of the entire population.

## Population and Sample

Describe the characteristics of the population you will study. A population is the large collection of individuals you have identified for your study. If your research takes place within a specific educational setting, describe the demographics of the entire population.

The sample is the subset of the population who you will contact to participate in your study. Provide details on the sampling method (specify the type of non-probability sampling – e.g. purposive sampling, convenience sampling, snowball sampling).

Briefly discuss the sample size. If you will use multiple instruments provide a sample size for each data collection point. If you are using a survey design, predict the size of your sample using an estimated response rate (based on population).

## Instrumentation

Provide details on the instruments that are used in your study. Interviews: Provide details on how the interview protocol (questions) was developed. Justify the use of one-on-one semi-structured interviews or focus groups. If you created the interview questions, describe the process used to select the questions. Detail how the interview questions are related to the research questions. If you conducted a pilot of the interview protocol, discuss the pilot and any resulting modifications here.

If you are using an existing interview protocol (or a modified protocol) describe who created the instrument and any details available on the validity of the instrument. Justify the selection of this instrument (link to your research questions). You will also need to provide details on any modification(s) made to the existing protocol.

Provide the complete interview protocol in an appendix (do not include the protocol within this section).

Observations: Provide details on where the observation will take place and the instrument that will be used to gather data for the observation. Qualitative: discuss how the observations allow you to observe the central phenomena. Quantitative: discuss how observations allow you to collect numerical data related to the research question(s)

Survey/Questionnaire: Provide detail on how the survey/questionnaire was developed and how it is related to your research question(s). Qualitative: discuss how the questionnaire allows you to collect information related to demographics or characteristics of your participants that are relevant to the central phenomena. Quantitative: discuss how the survey instrument was developed.

If you created the instrument, detail how the survey questions were selected, refined, and/or modified during the development of the instrument. When possible, address validity (e.g. construct validity, content validity) of your survey. Describe how the survey was designed to address potential issues related to administration and response rate.

If you are using an existing survey, detail how the instrument was developed by the original creator. Provide details on how the instrument was modified or revised for your study. When possible, discuss any information on reliability and validity of the existing survey instrument.

Document Analysis: Provide detail on how the document analysis will contribute to your understanding of the central phenomena. Discuss the selection of documents included for analysis and make clear links to your research question(s). When necessary, discuss how document analysis contributes to the validity of your study (e.g. triangulation).

Secondary Data: Provide details on the original purpose for the collection of the data and how the data was collected. Discuss how this data provides the information necessary to address the research questions and variables included in your study. Provide a detailed discussion on how the variables included in the secondary data set match the variables included in your study (a table might be appropriate).

## Data Collection

Provide a step-by-step description of your data collection methods. Include relevant information on gatekeepers (e.g. Institutional Review Board at the site, access to participants), consent, and protection of participant identity. You may have to provide multiple sections organized by the type of data (interview, observations, etc.)

How will you recruit participants?

How will you obtain informed consent?

How will you protect participant identity?

Where will interviews/observations take place?

How will you collect data (e.g. tape record, transcription, online security)?

How will you protect and store data?

## Data Analysis

What techniques will you use to analyze your data?

**Qualitative.** You may have to provide multiple sections organized by the type of data collected. How will you analyze transcripts from interviews? Describe your coding process and how you will identify themes. Discuss any software or analysis procedures you will employ. Discuss steps you will take to address validity (e.g. bracketing, triangulation, member checking, auditing)

**Quantitative.** How will you analyze the data? Organize this section by your research questions: Research question 1 – Present question here…

Follow the research question with a discussion of the type of statistical analysis you will utilize.

## Trustworthiness and Credibility (Qualitative study only)

Discuss actions you will take to ensure trustworthiness and address positionality. As scholar-practitioners you are more likely to address a problem of practice at your work site. There are additional steps you can take to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of your findings.

Helpful Resource: Given, L., & Saumure, K. (2008). Trustworthiness. In Lisa M. Given (Ed.), The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods. (pp. 896-897). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Helpful Resource: Brooks, R., te Riele, K., & Maguire, M. (2014). Identity, power and positionality. In Research Methods in Education: Ethics and education research. (pp. 100-117). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

## Limitations

Describe limitations – what influences are you unable to control for in your study? What are the potential weaknesses in your study that are not within your control? How might this influence your findings?

## Delimitations (optional)

Describe delimitations – what influences are you able to control for in your study? What choices have you made regarding for your study that link to your purpose and research questions?

## ****Results****

For quantitative analyses, give appropriate descriptive information, present the results in a logical fashion, answering the research question(s)/hypotheses as stated and appropriate to the type of data collected,

Identify assumptions of statistical tests and address any violation of assumptions, make decisions based on the results of the statistical analysis (for example: Are the results statistically significant?). Include relevant test statistic and p values. Present sufficient information so the reader can make an independent judgment regarding interpretation.

For qualitative analyses, present results logically and in a way that answers the research question(s) by distillation steps of the discernment process, present sufficient information so the reader can make an independent judgment about your interpretation, review published articles that use similar designs for examples of how to present qualitative, thematic findings, ensure that no potentially indentifying information is published.

## ****Evaluation of Findings****

This section is used to briefly report what your findings mean. The discussion will be expanded in the Application to Pracice. Interpret results in light of the theory (or theories) and/or the conceptual framework(s) you have identified. Describe whether the results obtained were expected given the literature and provide potential explanations for unexpected or conflicting results. Take care to avoid drawing conclusions beyond what can be interpreted directly from the study results.

## ****Implications****

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## ****Recommendations****

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## ****Conclusion****

Provide 2 – 3 paragraphs for your conclusion. Summarize the intent of your study and why your research is important.

# Application to Practice

(25 – 30 pages)

Consult with your chair about the content of this section. It should include an application to your professional practice that is informed by the findings of your study. The content of the application to practice is based on your findings and is original work that contributies to practitioner knowledge about your topic.

Options include a training, a handbook, a policy initiative, or other application practice. If you develop a training, you can include PPT slides that include notes on the content of the training or what the instructor or trainee should accomplish. Remember to link your application to practice to the findings of your study.

Use appropriate APA heading levels to organize your literature review, APA headings and formatting samples are provided below.

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# References

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# Appendix A: Title of Appendix

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# Appendix C: General Guidelines and Helpful Resources

The document should be 12-point font using Times New Roman.

The document should adhere to APA Style (6th) Edition

[Ed.D. Program Wiki page](http://tridenteddprogram.pbworks.com/)

[APA Quick Answers - References](http://www.apastyle.org/learn/quick-guide-on-references.aspx)

[APA Quick Answers - Formatting](http://www.apastyle.org/learn/quick-guide-on-formatting.aspx)

[Trident University Graduate Writing Handbook](https://mytlc.trident.edu/files/GRADUATE_WRITING_HANDBOOK.pdf)

[Trident University Ed.D. Program Handbook](https://mytlc.trident.edu/files/EdD-Program-Handbook.pdf)

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